

CMS Connection

Illinois Department of Central Management Services' Monthly Newsletter



Director Janel L. Forde

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Each year, the month of June greets us with warmth and the promise of summer fun. And this year, we can look forward to resuming more activities, safely and in person. **Illinois is on track to move into Phase 5 of the State's Restore Illinois plan on June 11**, meaning a full reopening of businesses, activities and the gatherings with our friends and loved ones that we missed over the last 15 months.

Nearly 5 million Illinoisans are fully vaccinated and now children 12 to 15 years of age are eligible to receive the vaccine. New case rates continue to drop and there is renewed excitement around getting back to what we once knew as normal.

While the pandemic is not officially over, we have fought hard to get to this point through months of uncertainty. **I am especially proud of all of your efforts to support the work of State agencies and help keep Illinois working for its residents when it truly mattered most, and it still does.**

As we look towards the future, I am hopeful that our efforts during the pandemic will help set the tone for a more welcoming and collaborative workplace with opportunities for new and fresh ideas. **Continuous improvement is one of the pillars of our strategic plan and I am excited to see CMS grow and build on our successes.**

In 2021, we are striving to do more and have already accomplished some incredible feats in the first half of the year, including the acquisition of **the new 555 W. Monroe building** and the **new FCIAA internal control checklist**, which won the Internal Audit team the honor of June 2021 Employee Team of the Month.

We are on track to do so much more, including **selling the James R. Thompson Center (JRTC)** which has been 20 years in the making. Together, and in spite of the odds, we are moving CMS forward.

So enjoy the sunshine CMS (with sunscreen), you earned it!

IN THIS ISSUE

**EMPLOYEE TEAM
OF THE MONTH**
Internal Audit Team

SAFETY CORNER
June is National
Safety Month

COVID-19 UPDATES
Restore Illinois
Bridge Phase
and Phase 5

BENEFIT CORNER
June is Men's
Health Month

EMPLOYEE TEAM OF THE MONTH: INTERNAL AUDIT TEAM



Shayne Clennon
(retired) Internal Audit
Supervisor



Brittany Ellis
Senior Internal Auditor



Mitch Flesch
Senior Internal Auditor



Amy Lange
Internal Auditor



Brittany Lennon
Internal Auditor



Dawn Meier
Internal Audit Supervisor



Glen Minks
Internal Auditor



Jack Rakers
Chief Internal Auditor



Butch Stilwell
Senior Internal Auditor

Congratulations to the CMS **Internal Audit Team** on being named **June 2021 Employee Team of the Month**. The team has been recognized for their collective efforts in updating the **FCIAA internal control checklist, the first update of its kind since its inception 30 years ago**.

The checklist is used by all State agencies, boards and commissions and this update is expected to increase the efficiency of the process through a more tailored approach for each entity's unique checklist. The checklist update is the latest achievement in the team's strategic internal auditing plan that was developed nearly four years ago.

"In 2017, we called this the ultimate stretch goal," said **Jack Rakers**, CMS Chief Internal Auditor. **"For years in State government this was thought of as impossible, but we did it."**

The road to updating the checklist began with a concerted effort with the CMS **Bureau of Personnel** to create new titles and opportunities for a career path within CMS for internal auditors. In 2017, CMS began adding internal auditors and training them to specialize in functional auditing areas such as **revenues, receivables, and receipts, or grant administration** to support the development of a specialized knowledge base and skillset for each. This professional development helped to ensure CMS had auditors that would have the skills necessary to update each of the sections of the FCIAA Checklist.

In 2018, the team began researching best practices and met with the **Office of the Auditor General** and key stakeholders who worked on the original checklist to build an efficient workplan. CMS also brought in additional auditors from the **Departments of Insurance and Agriculture, State Board of Education, Capital Development Board and the Office of the Comptroller**, who provided expertise in multiple areas and helped to finalize the checklist.

In July 2018, at the close of audit season, they immediately began to put the plan into action. **"It was a full court press for 2-3 months,"** said Rakers.

By November 2018, in four months, the team had completed majority of the work on the checklist, an impressive feat that speaks to the level of commitment, planning and all-around hard work that went into this project.

The checklist was finalized and sent to the **Legislative Audit Commission, Office of the Comptroller and Office of the Auditor General** for final review and approval. As of **May 26, 2021, the "ultimate stretch goal" has been accomplished and the checklist has been approved for statewide use**.

"My team is the best team around and the reason I come to work every day," said Rakers. "They are some of the brightest people I have ever worked with. As they progress in their careers, their knowledge of functional areas will only continue to increase."

COVID-19 UPDATES AND GUIDANCE

In May 2021, Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced new updates to the State's COVID-19 guidance to align with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In Illinois, people who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear a mask in most indoor and outdoor settings. State employees and Illinois residents who are not fully vaccinated should still wear face coverings and practice social distancing.

State employee who are fully vaccinated and do not work in a congregate care setting are no longer required to wear a face covering or social distance at work, with the following exceptions:

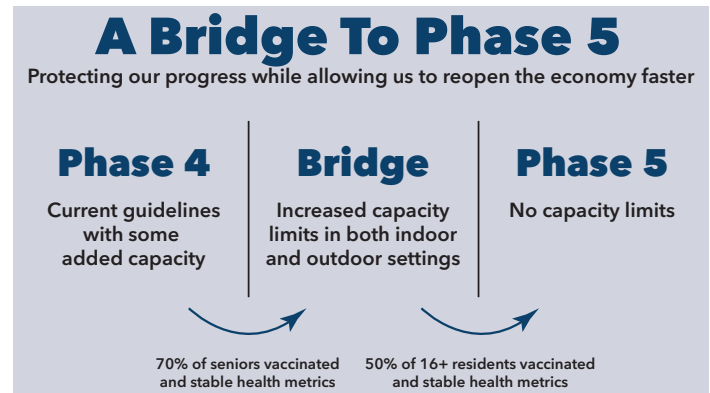
- In a setting where federal or local workplace rules or regulations include additional, more stringent requirements.
- If a State employee is, as part of their work, visiting a business that imposes more stringent requirements (such as requiring that fully vaccinated individuals wear face coverings), the State employee must follow those requirements.
- When multiple individuals are together in a conference room setting and there is uncertainty about the vaccination status of anyone who is present, all individuals should wear face coverings and social distance.

Please note that **both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals should continue to wear masks on public transportation, in congregate facilities, and in healthcare settings.**

Visitors to State facilities are still required to wear face coverings and practice social distancing.

While regulations are rolled back gradually, State employees should continue following the public health guidelines in worksites that have kept us safe during the pandemic such as frequent hand washing. There will be more discussions to come with your immediate manager as more guidance becomes available and the response evolves.

More than **4.8 million Illinoisans** are fully vaccinated and following recommendations from public health experts, Illinois is moving forward with a dial-like approach between the mitigations in Phase 4 and the post-pandemic new normal of Phase 5.



Illinois is currently in the bridge phase leading to Phase 5, which will allow for higher capacity limits and increased business operations, before public health experts tell us it is safe to move to the "new normal" and the more relaxed mitigations that Phase 5 will bring.

All regions of the state will move through these phases together based on statewide metrics and Illinois can move to Phase 5 as early as June 11.

Visit the [CDC Website](https://www.cdc.gov) for full details on the latest mask guidance. Visit coronavirus.illinois.gov to learn more about the Bridge phase and Phase 5.

JUNE IS NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH



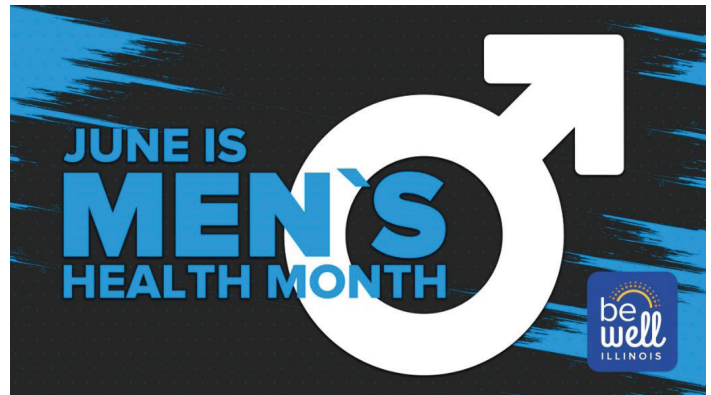
Annually, the **National Safety Council (NSC)** celebrates June as **National Safety Month** to promote safety in the workplace and beyond. This year marks the **25th anniversary** of the observance and the NSC has planned four weeks of resources to help prevent accidents before they start, address ongoing COVID-19 safety concerns, to help employees feel safe in the workplace and to explore opportunities for continuous improvement.

Visit the [NSC website](https://www.nsc.org) to learn more and find resources throughout the month.

JUNE IS MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

Each June we observe **Men's Health Month** to raise awareness about health care for men and focus on encouraging boys, men and their families to practice and implement healthy living decisions, such as exercising and eating healthy.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), men in the United States, on average, die 5 years earlier than women and die at higher rates from the three leading causes of death, heart disease, cancer and unintentional injuries. Visit the [Be Well Illinois Facebook page](#) for the latest updates on Men's Health Month events including a secret celebrity guest.



Visit www.illinois.gov/bewell for more information on Men's health and prevention resources.

JUNE WELLNESS WEBINARS

Using Self-Coaching to Achieve Your Health and Wellness Goals

Wednesday, June 16, 2021 from 12:00 – 1:00 PM CT

Join this webinar for:

- Exploring what healthy living means to you.
- Learning about self-coaching.
- Learning how self-coaching can help to achieve health and wellness goals, and specifically how to use it in day to day life.

[Click here to join](#) (No registration needed) or join by phone: 1-719-234-7800 Participant code: 993237

Leadership Series:

Best Practices for Managing Remote Employees

Wednesday, June 23, 2021 from 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Join this webinar to:

- Examine the "Fast Forward" pandemic experience of the remote workforce – pre, post and current state.
- Discuss benefits and challenges of working remotely.
- Share best practices and helpful management guidelines for providing support, identifying, and responding to employee concerns.

[Click Here to Register](#)



Wellness Podcasts:

5 Health Questions Every Man Should Ask

This month we explore the five health questions every man should ask. Our guest is [Dr. Charles C. Liang](#) of [Carle Foundation Hospital](#) in Urbana.

[Click here to listen](#)

Men's Health

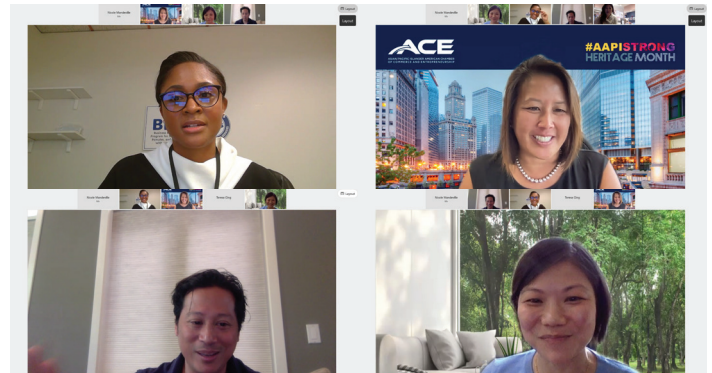
In recognition of Men's Health Awareness Month, the podcast will feature an episode on discussing tips on what men should know and do about their health during every stage of their adult life. Our featured guest is [Dr. Robert Healy](#), a long-time adult medicine physician and the chief quality officer at Carle Health in Urbana, Illinois.

[Click here to listen](#)

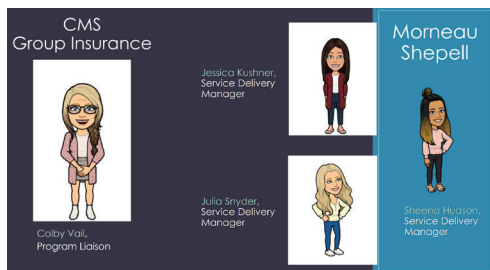
EVENTS RECAP

#AAPI Strong Equity and Inclusion Event

The CMS **Business Enterprise Program (BEP)** hosted a discussion in recognition of **Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month** and **Small Business Month**. In this session, **Dr. Karen Eng** from CSMI, **Dennis Mondero** from Chinese Mutual Aid Association (CMAA), **Khai Lang** from Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Small Business owner **Teresa Ging** joined CMS BEP Deputy Director **Arielle Johnson** to discuss strategies to support AAPI-owned businesses and working together to fight discrimination.



Benefit Choice Virtual Member Seminars



The **Benefit Choice Open Enrollment** period ended June 1, 2021. During this period the

Group Insurance Division provided six virtual member seminars during the month of May with 2,327 participants.

The seminars covered the **changes and updates for the FY22 plan year, a walk-through of the online enrollment tool** and a review of the benefits available through MyBenefits Plus.

As a reminder, if you have added a dependent or opted out of State health insurance, **you have until June 10, 2021 to submit your documentation**. If you fail to provide required documentation by the deadline, the election made, specific to the documentation requirement, will be canceled.

State Employment Virtual Job Fair



On May 25, 2021, CMS hosted a State Employment Virtual Job Fair in celebration of **Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month**.

In this session, CMS gave an overview of the application pro-

cess and insights into working for the State. Representatives from the **Illinois Department on Aging, Illinois Department of Corrections, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT), Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, Illinois State Police, Illinois Department of Revenue and Illinois Department Veterans' Affairs** also led breakout sessions to discuss available opportunities at their agencies.



Office of the Director, Janel L. Forde (217) 782-2141

For more information on this newsletter or any other CMS initiatives, contact:

Marjani Williams, Deputy Director (312) 814-1676

Wendy Butler, Director of Governmental Affairs (217) 785-1941